

PUTTING NINR'S RESOURCES TO WORK: A THOREAU EXAMINATION

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An early scientist once remarked, "I found that, by working about six weeks in a year, I could meet all the expenses of living. The whole of my winters, as well as most of my summers, I had free and clear for study." Such a financial arrangement worked well for Henry D. Thoreau, the 19th century American naturalist, writer, and social scientist. Times have changed, however, and the demands of modern scientific exploration are not so easily met.

The fiscal year 2003 appropriation completes a 5-year effort to double the budget of NIH, the nation's most significant effort to increase research resources for health. During that time, the NINR appropriation grew from \$63.6 million in 1998 to more than \$130.6 million in 2003, a 105% increase. At NINR, this increase is funding both new and continuation projects, supporting the research training of nurse scientists, expanding the research infrastructure, and enhancing the dissemination of research results.

Approximately three fourths of the NINR budget is devoted to research project grants, and the number of research applications continues to rise. However, NINR's success rate for competing project grants continues to be lower than the NIH average of 31%. The fiscal year 2003 success rate for NINR is estimated to be 21%. Simply put, this means that NINR grants are very competitive, and our cadre of researchers is growing at an even faster rate than our budget.

Research training for 201 predoctoral nurses and 73 postdoctoral nurse fellows accounted for about 8% of the NINR budget in fiscal year 2002. The current budget year 2003 will see a slight decline in the number of total research training positions because of an increase in the stipend rate. The current national shortage of nurses severely affects the pipeline for nurse scientists and nursing faculty. NINR will continue to search for ways to draw students into nursing, recruit promising nurse scientists into research careers, and maintain our research training support.

Approximately 5% of the NINR budget goes to support our

Centers programs. In addition to our Exploratory and Developmental Centers, we have a joint initiative with the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities to create partnerships between established, research-intensive institutions and growing, minority-serving institutions. These Nursing Partnership Centers on Reducing Health Disparities have been established to increase health disparities research and broaden the diversity of the nurse researcher pool.

To help disseminate information about NINR-funded research results, citations for articles published by NINR-funded investigators have now been posted on our Web site from the year 2000, along with a link to summary capsules of selected articles. Another way we are working to spread the news on NINR research is with our expanded *Making a Difference* document, a compilation of findings from 16 programs of research being incorporated into a variety of clinical and community settings. We hope that *Making a Difference*, available for download on our Web site, can provide a valuable tool for nurses, students, and educators to explore the benefits of research and bring research to life (URLs listed below).

Mr. Thoreau counseled, "Go confidently in the direction of your dreams." The growth of nursing research helps nurses and other health professionals pursue knowledge as the basis for their practice to benefit the health of all. At NINR, we strive to put our resources to the best use, supporting new programs and centers of research excellence, training new nurse scientists to continue the work, and disseminating our findings in a variety of venues. We count on you to help us accomplish this. With these efforts, we hope to bring the dreams of our scientists to fruition.

For more information, please access these Web sites:

NINR, research articles and research capsules: <http://www.nih.gov/ninr/news-info/publications.html>

NINR, *Making a Difference*: <http://www.nih.gov/ninr/news-info/Rudyshow2.pdf>